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## BOOK REVIEWS.

THE VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE ; A STUDY IN HUMAN NATURE. Being the Gifford Lectures Delivered at Edinburgh in 1901-1902. By *William James, LL. D.*, etc., Corresponding Member of the Institute of France and of the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences, Professor of Philosophy at Harvard University. New York, London, and Bombay : Longmans, Green, and Co. 1902. Pages, xii, 534.

Professor James remarks in the opening lines of his preface : "This book would never have been written had I not been honored with an appointment as Gifford Lecturer on Natural Religion at the University of Edinburgh ;" and the world therefore owes a debt of gratitude to that institution for the admirable production which lies before us. Few persons are better qualified than the author, by range of philosophic insight and human sympathy, to describe man's religious constitution. The work is brilliant at every turn, and the natural gloom of the subject has everywhere been lightened by flashes of wit and humor. Differ as one may from certain of the author's conclusions, or regarding his generous attitude towards the aberrancies of psychical research, one cannot help paying to this work the tribute of admiration that belongs to every classical expression of psychological inquiry.

It had been Professor James's original intention to give two distinct courses of lectures,—one descriptive, on man's religious appetites, and the other metaphysical, on their satisfaction through philosophy ; but the unexpected growth of his material resulted in the second subject being postponed entirely, the description of man's religious constitution now filling the twenty lectures. The author has not omitted, however, to suggest his philosophic conclusions in a brief postscript. He hopes some day to be able to express them in more explicit form.

Professor James believing that greater wisdom lies in a large acquaintance with particular facts has, in his discussions, wisely eschewed abstractions ; and has "loaded" his lectures with concrete examples "chosen among the extremer expressions of the religious temperament." His purpose in so doing has not been to offer a caricature of the subject, which may be the impression gained by some readers, nor to afford material for amusement, which in some cases he involun-

tarily does, but to obtain a sound basis of religious actuality to work upon, and all will join him in the belief that in the end his procedure has been justified. We shall consider in detail a few of the points which he has raised.

At the outset, Professor James makes an important distinction,—one which is commonly ignored. It is the distinction between questions of fact and questions of value. This is the logical distinction between the two orders of inquiry concerning constitution, origin, and history on the one hand, and importance, meaning, and significance on the other, the answer being given to the first in an *existential judgment* or proposition and that to the second in a proposition of value, or *spiritual judgment*. He says: "In the matter of religions it is particularly easy to distinguish the two orders of question. Every religious phenomenon has its history and its derivation from natural antecedents. What is nowadays called the higher criticism of the Bible is only a study of the Bible from this existential point of view, neglected too much by the earlier Church. Under just what biographic conditions did the sacred writers bring forth their various contributions to the holy volume? And what had they exactly in their several individual minds, when they delivered their utterances? These are manifestly questions of historical fact, and one does not see how the answer to them can decide offhand the still further question: of what use should such a volume, with its manner of coming into existence so defined, be to us as a guide to life and a revelation? To answer this other question we must have already in our mind some sort of a general theory as to what the peculiarities in a thing should be which give it value for purposes of revelation; and this theory itself would be what I just called a spiritual judgment. Combining it with our existential judgment, we might indeed deduce another spiritual judgment as to the Bible's worth. Thus if our theory of revelation-value were to affirm that any book, to possess it, must have been composed automatically or not by the free caprice of the writer, or that it must exhibit no scientific and historic errors and express no local or personal passions, the Bible would probably fare ill at our hands. But if, on the other hand, our theory should allow that a book may well be a revelation in spite of errors and passions and deliberate human composition, if only it be a true record of the inner experiences of great-souled persons wrestling with the crises of their fate, then the verdict would be much more favorable. You see that the existential facts by themselves are insufficient for determining the value; and the best adepts of the higher criticism accordingly never confound the existential with the spiritual problem. With the same conclusions of fact before them, some take one view, and some another, of the Bible's value as a revelation, according as their spiritual judgment as to the foundation of values differs."

As will be seen, the Professor is at once prepared to do justice to both sides of the question without damaging anyone's feelings.

Next, the neurological ground is cleared, and the medical materialism that seeks to undermine all the extremer forms of religious expression demolished.

The author describes the doctrine as follows: "Medical materialism finishes up Saint Paul by calling his vision on the road to Damascus a discharging lesion of the occipital cortex, he being an epileptic. It snuffs out Saint Teresa as an hysteric, Saint Francis of Assisi as an hereditary degenerate. George Fox's discontent with the shams of his age, and his pining for spiritual veracity, it treats as a symptom of a disordered colon. Carlyle's organ-tones of misery it accounts for by a gastroduodenal catarrh. All such mental over-tensions, it says, are, when you come to the bottom of the matter, mere affairs of diathesis (auto-intoxications most probably), due to the perverted action of various glands which physiology will yet discover." The refutation of medical materialism is as follows: "Modern psychology, finding definite psycho-physical connections to hold good, assumes as a convenient hypothesis that the dependence of mental states upon bodily conditions must be thorough-going and complete. If we adopt the assumption, then of course what medical materialism insists on must be true in a general way, if not in every detail: Saint Paul certainly had once an epileptoid, if not an epileptic seizure; George Fox was an hereditary degenerate; Carlyle was undoubtedly auto-intoxicated by some organ or other, no matter which,—and the rest. But now, I ask you, how can such an existential account of fact of mental history decide in one way or another upon their spiritual significance? According to the general postulate of psychology just referred to, there is not a single one of our states of mind, high or low, healthy or morbid, that has not some organic process as its condition. Scientific theories are organically conditioned just as much as religious emotions are; and if we only knew the facts intimately enough, we should doubtless see 'the liver' determining the dicta of the sturdy atheist as decisively as it does that of the Methodist under conviction anxious about his soul. When it alters in one way the blood that percolates it, we get the Methodist, when in another way, we get the atheist form of mind. So of all our raptures and our drynesses, our longings and pantings, our questions and beliefs. They are equally organically founded, be they of religious or of non-religious content."

We cannot forbear also quoting here the refutation which the author offers of the theory that religion is a species of perverted sexuality: "It reminds one, so crudely is it often employed, of the famous Catholic taunt, that the Reformation may be best understood by remembering that its *fons et origo* was Luther's wish to marry a nun:—the effects are infinitely wider than the alleged causes, and for the most part opposite in nature. It is true that in the vast collection of religious phenomena, some are undisguisedly amatory—e. g., sex deities and obscene rites in polytheism, and ecstatic feelings of union with the Saviour in a few Christian mystics. But then why not equally call religion an aberration of the digestive function, and prove one's point by the worship of Bacchus and Ceres, or by the ecstatic feelings of some other saints about the Eucharist? Religious language clothes itself in such poor symbols as our life affords, and the whole organism gives overtones of comment whenever the mind is strongly stirred to expression.

Language drawn from eating and drinking is probably as common in religious literature as is language drawn from the sexual life. We 'hunger and thirst' after righteousness; we 'find the Lord a sweet savor'; we 'taste and see that he is good.' 'Spiritual milk for American babes, drawn from the breasts of both testaments,' is a sub-title of the once famous New England Primer, and Christian devotional literature indeed quite floats in milk, thought of from the point of view, not of the mother, but of the greedy babe."

In the second lecture, the topic to be studied is circumscribed. Religion is defined arbitrarily to mean "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider divine." What this "divine" is remains in each case for interpretation, as for example in atheistic Buddhism and transcendental idealism. Dire necessity confronts us in our conduct; renunciation is the price of life.

"Entbehren sollst du! sollst entbehren!  
Das ist der ewige Gesang  
Der jedem an die Ohren klingt,  
Den, unser ganzes Leben lang  
Uns heiser jede Stunde singt.'

"For when all is said and done, we are in the end absolutely dependent on the universe; and into sacrifices and surrenders of some sort, deliberately looked at and accepted, we are drawn and pressed as into our only permanent positions of repose. Now in those states of mind which fall short of religion, the surrender is submitted to as an imposition of necessity, and the sacrifice is undergone at the very best without complaint. In the religious life, on the contrary, surrender and sacrifice are positively espoused: even unnecessary givings-up are added in order that the happiness may increase. Religion thus makes easy and felicitous what in any case is necessary; and if it be the only agency that can accomplish this result, its vital importance as a human faculty stands vindicated beyond dispute. It becomes an essential organ of our life, performing a function which no other portion of our nature can so successfully fulfill. From the merely biological point of view, so to call it, this is a conclusion to which, so far as I can now see, we shall inevitably be led"

Then, in successive chapters, replete with clever descriptions and analyses of concrete cases, Professor James treats of "The Reality of the Unseen," "The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness," "The Sick Soul," "The Divided Self, and the Process of Its Unification," "Conversion," "Saintliness," and "Mysticism." Lastly, the philosophical side of the subject is indicated. In religion, the primacy is that of feeling; philosophy is a secondary function, unable to warrant faith's veracity. Conceptual processes can class facts, define them, interpret them; but they do not produce them, nor can they reproduce their individuality. There is a plus, a thisness, which feeling alone can answer for. "In all sad sincerity," says Professor James, "I think we must conclude that the attempt to demonstrate

by purely intellectual processes the truth of the deliverances of direct religious experience is absolutely hopeless."

But there is one task that philosophy *can* perform for religion. "If she will abandon metaphysics and deduction for criticism and induction, and frankly transform herself from theology into science of religions, she can make herself enormously useful. . . . Sifting out unworthy formulations, she can leave a residuum of conceptions that at least are possible. With these she can deal as *hypotheses*, testing them in all the manners, whether negative or positive, by which hypotheses are ever tested. She can reduce their number, as some are found more open to objection. She can perhaps become the champion of one which she picks out as being the most closely verified or verifiable. She can refine upon the definition of this hypothesis, distinguishing between what is innocent over-belief and symbolism in the expression of it, and what is to be literally taken. As a result, she can offer mediation between different believers, and help to bring about consensus of opinion. She can do this the more successfully, the better she discriminates the common and essential from the individual and local elements of the religious beliefs which she compares. I do not see why a critical Science of Religions of this sort might not eventually command as general a public adhesion as is commanded by a physical science."

We conclude with the author's general characterisation of religion. Summing up in the broadest possible way the criteria of the religious life, Professor James finds that it includes the following beliefs:

"1. That the visible world is part of a more spiritual universe from which it draws its chief significance;

"2. That union or harmonious relation with that higher universe is our true end;

"3. That prayer or inner communion with the spirit thereof—be that spirit 'God' or 'law'—is a process wherein work is really done, psychological or material, within the phenomenal world.

"Religion includes also the following psychological characteristics:

"4. A new zest which adds itself like a gift to life, and takes the form either of lyrical enchantment or of appeal to earnestness and heroism.

"5. An assurance of safety and a temper of peace, and, in relation to others, a preponderance of loving affections."

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FRAGMENTS IN PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE; BEING COLLECTED ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES. By *James Mark Baldwin*, Ph. D. Princeton, Hon. D. Sc. Oxon, LL. D. Glasgow, Stuart Professor in Princeton University. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1902. Pages, xii, 389. Price, \$2.50.

Dr. Baldwin has rescued in this volume certain fugitive pieces on philosophy, psychology, and life that would otherwise have dwelt in the oblivion of the periodical literature to which they were originally consigned. Their titles are: I. Phi-